

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 164078

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT GRENADA 0047 ACTION SECSTATE JUN 19.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L GRENADA 0047

EXDIS

FOR S/S RUST DEMING FROM MARK DION

FROM USDEL OASGA

USOAS DEL 32

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, OAS, (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJ: SECRETARY'S BILATERAL WITH VENEZUELAN FONMIN EXCOVAR -
JUNE 14

1. PARTICIPANTS: US: THE SECRETARY, UNDER SECRETARY HABIB,
AMB TODMAN, ASSIST SECRETARY CARTER, AMB MCGEE, MRS VAN
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REIGENBERG (INTERPRETER),, MR S ROGERS (ARA/ECP) NOTETAKER,
VENEZUELA:: FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR, AMB MACHIN, (OAS),
AMB NAVAS.

2. SUBJECTS: HUMAN RIGHTS; THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE;
PEREZ VISIT TO WASHINGTON; PANAMA CAVAL NEGOTIATIONS.

3. THE MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY AGREED MRS CARTER'S
VISIT TO CARACAS WENT WELL. THE SECRETARY SAID WE WERE
LOOKING FORWARD TO PRESIDENT PEREZ'S VISIT TO THE US.

ESCOVAR THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT NOT ONLY TO BILATERAL BUT ALSO TO US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS. THE SECRETARY ADDED THE GLOBAL DIMENSION, PARTICULARLY IF THE TWO PRESIDENTS ISSUED THE STATEMENT THE VENEZUELAN HAD SUGGESTED ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. IN ANSWER TO THE SECRETARY'S QUESTION, ESCOVAR SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO DO SOMETHING AT THIS MEETING ON HUMAN RIGHTS. HE REFERRED TO THE CONCERN IN THE SOUTHERN CONE ABOUT TERRORISM. VENEZUELA AGREED ON INTERNATIONAL MEASURES AGAINST TERRORISM, BUT THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES TENDED TO SIMPLIFY THE PROBLEM AND CONSIDER THAT ANY CONCESSION WEAKENED THEIR FIGHT AGAINST IT.

5. PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ESCOVAR WENT ON, MARKED THE FIRST TIME SINCE WORLD WAR II THAT THE US WAS EXPRESSING A MORAL POLICY. STRATEGICALLY, THE WEST HAD LOST GROUND IN THE LAST 30 YEARS, BUT HE THOUGHT THE SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO YIELD EVENTUALLY IN FACE OF THE MORAL POSITION OF THE WORLD. ESCOVAR WAS HAPPY, THEREFORE, THAT THE SECRETARY HAD PLACED THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT.

6. AMBASSADOR MACHIN SAID THE US SHOULD STAND VERY FIRM
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ON HUMAN RIGHTS. WITH SUPPORT FROM OTHERS LIKE VENEZUELA, WE MIGHT EXPECT RESULTS IN THREE OR FOUR YEARS. HE SUGGESTED MACHINERY TO MAKE THE PROVISIONS OF THE OAS CHARTER BINDING IN SOME FASHION, PERHAPS AS PART OF THE CHARTER REFORM EXERCISE.

7. EXCOVAR THOUGHT A DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS HERE WOULD BE SEEN AS US INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL MATTERS. HE WOULD SAY THE NEXT DAY THAT, SINCE WE ARE ALL COMMITTED TO PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS, THIS WAS NOT INTERVENTION. VENEZUELA AGREED THAT WE SHOULD NOT GIVE INTERNATIONAL CREDITS TO VIOLATORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. WHILE THE VENEZUELAN WERE NOT RIGID ABOUT IT, THEY SUGGESTED THAT SUPPLYING COUNTRIES NOT APPROVE ARMS SUPPLIES OR LOANS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BANKS UNLESS AND UNTIL THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WERE STRONGER AND MORE AUTONOMOUS, THIS PROCEDURE WOULD OFFSET THE RELIEF THAT THE US HAD TOO MUCH INFLUENCE OVER THE DECISIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANKS.

8. ESCOVAR SUGGESTED FURTHER THAT, SINCE NICARAGUA AND THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES WERE SO CONCERNED ABOUT TERRORISM AND NON-INTERVENTION, IT MIGHT BE PRACTICAL TO HAVE A DECLARATION ON ALL THREE SUBJECTS, WITH HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WAS TWO DECLARATIONS, BUT VENEZUELA AND SOME OTHERS WOULD VOTE FOR THE TERRORISM AND NON-INTERVENTION RESOLUTION ONLY IF THE OTHERS SUPPORTED THE HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION. VENEZUELA WAS IN ANY CASE

PREPARED TO MAKE A STRONG DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

9. THE SECRETARY SAID THIS WAS VERY IMPORTANT. HE ASKED WHETHER THE VENEZUELAN THOUGHT WE COULD GET SUPPORT FOR FURTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND, THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL COUNTRIES SHOULD BE OPEN TO VISITS FROM THE COMMISSION.

10. ESCOVAR SAID BOTH POINTS WERE VERY SENSITIVE, THE FIRST
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ALMOST AS MUCH AS THE SECOND. ON THE FINANCIAL MATTER, HE AGREED WITH WHAT THE SECRETARY HAD SAID IN HIS INTERVENTION ABOUT DISTRIBUTING FINANCIAL COSTS (I.E. REDUCING THE US SHARE), BUT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS WERE ALWAYS PAINFUL. THE PROPOSAL FOR VISITS WAS VERY DIFFICULT BECAUSE IT INVOLVED SOVEREIGNTY. PEOPLE WEREN'T CONCERNED ABOUT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BUT ABOUT WHAT SOME FUTURE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT DO. IN PRINCIPLE THE PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTABLE, AND VENEZUELA WAS OPEN TO VISITS.

11. ESCOVAR ASKED WHAT THE US EXPECTED IN PRACTICAL TERMS. THE SECRETARY SAID HE LOOKED FOR GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. IF THAT WAS NOT POSSIBLE, HE HOPED FOR CLEAR STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FROM A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO OPEN THEIR COUNTRIES TO THE COMMISSION. HE RECOGNIZED THAT WE WOULD NOT ACCOMPLISH THE OBJECTIVE OVERNIGHT. BUT IF PEOPLE STOOD FAST IN TIME OTHERS WOULD GO ALONG. ESCOVAR AGREED.

12. RESPONDING TO A COMMENT BY ESCOVAR, AMBASSADOR TODMAN SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH CUBA WAS SUSPENDED FROM THE OAS, IT HAD NOT WITHDRAWN, SO THE ORGANIZATION HAD THE RIGHT TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS CONCERNING CUBA.

13. ESCOVAR SAID THIS WAS AN INTERESTING APPROACH. IF WE COULD GET SOME SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT IT, WE COULD USE IT WITH CUBA. HE SUGGESTED USING THE ISSUE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

14. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION FROM THE SECRETARY, ESCOVAR SAID THE BRAZILIAN POSITION WAS VERY IMPORTANT. DESPITE ITS AFRICAN POLICY, WHICH WAS NOT GOING VERY WELL, IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR BRAZIL TO HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP IN THE
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WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO MOVE BRAZIL. WE SHOULD TRY TO GET MORE FROM THEM THAN WE THINK WE CAN GET.

15. THE SECRETARY SAID COSTA RICA, MEXICO AND HE THOUGHT MOST OF THE CARIBBEAN WOULD BE HELPFUL, AS WELL AS COLOMBIA. ESCOVAR AGREED WITH RESPECT TO THE CARIBBEAN AND COLOMBIA.

16. THE SECRETARY ASKED HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED. ESCOVAR SAID NO COUNTRY COULD OPPOSE HUMAN RIGHTS. HE DISCUSSED THE POLITICAL APPROACH, SAYING THAT PINOCHET DID NOT BELIEVE IN POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS AND COULDN'T UNDERSTAND THEM. VIDELA UNDERSTOOD BETTER, AND GEISEL UNDERSTOOD QUITE WELL. ESCOVAR HAD QUITE A GOOD IMPRESSION OF GEISEL, WITH WHICH THE SECRETARY CONCURRED. THE SECRETARY AGREED TO COMMUNICATE WITH ESCOVAR AFTER HIS MEETING WITH SILVEIR THE NEXT DAY.

17. ESCOVAR SAID WE NEEDED TO DO MORE WITH ARGENTINA. CHILE WOULD BE VERY SENSITIVE TO A CLEAR POSITION OF THE US TOWARDS ITS MOVING TOWARD DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES. SPAIN WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE, AND ECUADOR WAS TOO. LATIN AMERICAN TENDED TO BE PERFECTIONISTS, WANTING TO START WITH A WIDE OPEN SYSTEM. SUCCESS OF THE ECUADOREAN AND SPECIALLY SPANISH EXAMPLES WOULD SHOW THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE TO MOVE TO DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS.

18. THE SECRETARY SAID THE DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENT IN SPAIN SEEMED TO HAVE SUCCEEDED, DESPITE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. ESCOVAR SAID THE VENEZUELAN HAD BEEN HELPING SPAIN ECONOMICALLY. IN ANSWER TO AMB TODMAN'S QUESTION ABOUT THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S ROLE, ESCOVAR SAID HE HAD VERY GOOD OPINION OF BALAGUER BUT THAT BALAGUER WAS RESPONSIVE TO A VARIETY OF PRESSURES INCLUDING THAT OF CUBAN REFUGEES IN SANTO DOMINGO.

19. THE SECRETARY ASKED WHERE THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE SHOULD GO NOW THAT CIEC HAD APPARENTLY CONCLUDED. ESCOVAR
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SAID CIEC'S BASIC PROBLEM WAS THAT IT WAS TOO ECUMENICAL. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER MIGHT BE GIVEN SOME SIMPLE CONTENT. HE DREW A PARALLEL IN THE NEGOTIATING METHODS WITH THE LOME AGREEMENT.

20. THE SECRETARY AGREED THAT THE DIALOGUE MUST CONTINUE. HE ALSO AGREED THAT THERE WAS MUCH MORE IN THE BASKET THAN WE COULD HOPE TO DEAL WITH IN THAT FORUM AND IN THE TIME AVAILABLE. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS MIGHT BEST BE HANDLED IN DIFFERENT FORA TO SEE IF WE COULD REACH AGREEMENT OR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING. HE HAD REAL DOUBTS ABOUT ESTABLISHING A PRE-EXISTING COMMON FUND FOR RAW MATERIALS. HE RECOGNIZED THERE WAS A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH. WE WOULD NEGOTIATE ON SEVEN OR EIGHT SPECIFIC COMMODITIES AND THEN SET ABOUT TO GET FUNDS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AGREEMENTS, BUT IT WAS UNREALISTIC TO THINK OF A PRE-EXISTING FUND OF \$6 OR \$8 BILLION.

21. ESCOVAR SAID THE SECRETARY'S OPINIONS WERE VERY IMPORTANT AND VERY INSTRUCTIVE, THOUGH DIFFERENT FROM THEIRS. HE SAID, AND THE SECRETARY AGREED, THAT THE SUBJECT SHOULD COME UP DURING PEREZ'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

22. THE SECRETARY SAID HE BELIEVED, AND PRESIDENT CARTER AGREED, THAT THE US SHOULD DO MORE IN FOREIGN AID. THIS WOULD BE A SUBSTANTIAL PROBLEM WITH CONGRESS, BUT THE PRESIDENT WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD. A MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM IS THE SO-CALLED STRUCTURAL CHANGES. HE AGREED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO COME, BUT ONLY OVER TIME. IT WOULD TAKE MUCH EXPLAINING IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

23. AMB MCGEE NOTED THAT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WERE EITHER DISCOURAGED AFTER YEARS OF SEEKING WORLD COOPERATION OR TOO CONFIDENTIAL

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NEW TO UNDERSTAND THE NECESSITY. THE ADMINISTRATION FELT STRONGLY ABOUT PURSUING THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH PANAMA, AND IT HAD A CUBAN POLICY, BUT THESE TENDED TO LOSE THE SUPPORT OF CONSERVATIVES. TOEHR ACTIONS, BASED ON POSITIONS OF STRENGTH, OFTEN LOST THEIR LIBERALS, SO IT BECAME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO PURSUE PROGRAMS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SO FORTH.

24. AMB MCGEE ASKED ABOUT THE APPARENT CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ADVICE TO CONTINUE TO INSIST ON THE PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS BUT TO AVOID STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTISTS IN ARGENTINA OR BRAZIL.

25. ESCOVAR RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULTY BUT THOUGHT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF WE COULD SHOW THOSE COUNTRIES REAL LEADERSHIP. ALREADY THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE ON THEM.

26. MACHIN CALLED IT A GAME BETWEEN THE PRINCIPLES AND THE TACTICS. THE IMPORTANT THING IN ARGENTINA WAS TO SUPPORT THE RIGHT FORCES IN THE ARMY. IN BRAZIL, OTHER FACTORS WERE HELPFUL, ESPECIALLY THE RESURGENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION FAVORING A NEW APPROACH. THE GOVERNMENT THERE NO LONGER HAD UNANIMOUS SUPPORT.

27. THE SECRETARY AGREED THAT THE DAY WOULD BE LOST UNLESS THE US WERE CLEAR AND ABSOLUTELY FIRM ON THE PRINCIPLE. WE SHOULD NEVER GIVE UP ON THE PRINCIPLE EVEN IF WE DID NOT HAVE THE VOTES TO SUCCEED IN THIS MEETING.

28. ESCOVAR REITERATED THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS PRACTICAL TO GET A DECLARATION, DEPENDING ON THE DRAFTING. HE THOUGHT WE COULD GET SOMETHING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, BUT NOT ON OUR BUDGETARY OBJECTIVE. HE NOTED THAT BRAZIL COULD NOT ORGANIZE A JOINT MEETING AGAINST PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY BECAUSE VENEZUELA, ECUADOR

AND OTHERS OPPOSED IT. HE SAID THE US POSITION HAD NEVER
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BEEN BETTER IN LATIN AMERICA THAN IT WAS TODAY.

29. AMB MACHIN STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF APPROPRIATE TACTICS. HE THOUGHT THE URUGUAYAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S TACTIC WAS TO TRY TO DESTROY THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION BY CLAIMING THAT THE COMMISSION VIOLATED THE OAS CHARTER. WE MUST RESPOND BY SAYING WE WANT TO STRENGTHEN THE COMMISSION. HE RECALLED THE SUCCESS OF THE VENEZUELAN-COLOMBIAN-JAMAICAN-US RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS A YEAR AGO IN SANTIAGO, BECAUSE WE ALL STUCK TO PRINCIPLE.

30. SECRETARY VANCE SAID HE THOUGHT WE WERE FAIRLY WELL AGREED ON THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING OF THE TWO PRESIDENTS, INCLUDING SOME SORT OF AGREEMENT ON ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, NORTH-SOUTH, ENERGY AS A WHOLE, AND OF COURSE HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST. AFRICA WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED. AMB TODMAN ADDED THE CARIBBEAN, TENSION IN THE ANDES AND BELIZE.

31. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT THE BRITISH WERE PREPARED TO GIVE UP ON BELIZE UNLESS THERE WAS SOME BY THE GUATEMALANS, TO WHICH ESCOVAR AGREED. ESCOVAR SUGGESTED ECONOMIC COMPENSATION TO GUATEMALA. UNDER SECRETARY HABIB SAID THE BRITISH WERE IMPATIENT. IF FORCED TO THEY WOULD STRENGTHEN THE DEFENSE FORCES AND DECLARE INDEPENDENCE. THE PRESENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS MORE WILLING TO COMPROMISE, AND HE HAD THOUGHT THAT THAT WAS TRUE ALSO OF THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT. ESCOVAR SAID HE THOUGHT GUATEMALA WOULD COMPROMISE IF THERE WAS SOME WAY TO SAVE FACE. HE HAD TOLD CALLAHAN IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE BRITISH NOT WASH THEIR HANDS OF THE SITUATION.

33. HABIB SAID NOW WAS THE TIME TO COMPROMISE FOR GUATEMALA AND THE TIME FOR THE BRITISH TO GIVE AS MUCH AS THEY
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COULD. ESCOVAR AGREED AND SAID THE HAD SAID AS MUCH TO LAUGERUD. HABIB SAID PRICE WAS PRESSING THE BRITISH. THERE WERE TOO MANY FACTORS PUSHING TOWARD A SUDDEN DECISION. ESCOVAR SAID HE HAD TALKED TO ROWLANDS SEVERAL TIMES.

34. THE SECRETARY SAID THER HAD BEEN SOME PROGRESS IN THE PANAMA NEGOTIATIONS AND SUCCESS WAS WITHIN OUR GRASP IF BOTH SIDES SHOWED FLEXIBILITY AND GOOD SENSE. ESCOVAR SAID PEREZ HAD ADVISED MODERATION ON TORRIJOS. THE SECRETARY SAID IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT IN THE CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION YEAR IF THERE WERE NO AGREEMENT THIS YEAR.

34. AMBASSADOR MACIN SAID HUMAN RIGHTS PUT THE SOVIET
UNION ON THE DEFENSIVE FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND THE
SECRETARY ADDED THAT THIS WAS ALSO TRUE IN THE ARMAMENTS
AREA. ESCOVAR SAID THAT THE SECRETARY AND GROMYKO SEEMED
TO HAVE A DIFFERENCE OF STYLE, TO WHICH THE SECRETARY
ADDED THAT THERE WERE SOME DIFFERENCES OF SUBSTANCE ALSO.
CGEE
UNQUOTE VANCE

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